ROBERT KIRKMAN
LORENZO DE FELICI
PATRICIO DELPECHE
VOID RIVALS
image
#17

ROBERT KIRKMAN
/WRITER/

LORENZO DE FELICI
/ARTIST/

PATRICIO DELPECHE
/COLORIST/

RUS WOOTON
/LETTERER/

LORENZO DE FELICI
NIKOLA ČIŽMEŠIJA
CONOR HUGHES
JOEY VAZQUEZ
FRÉDÉRIC PHAM CHUONG
/COVERS/

BEN ABERNATHY
/EDITOR/

ANDRES JUAREZ
/LOGO & PUBLICATION DESIGN/

/VOID RIVALS CREATED BY/
ROBERT KIRKMAN &
LORENZO DE FELICI

ASHBY FLORENCE
/PRODUCTION/

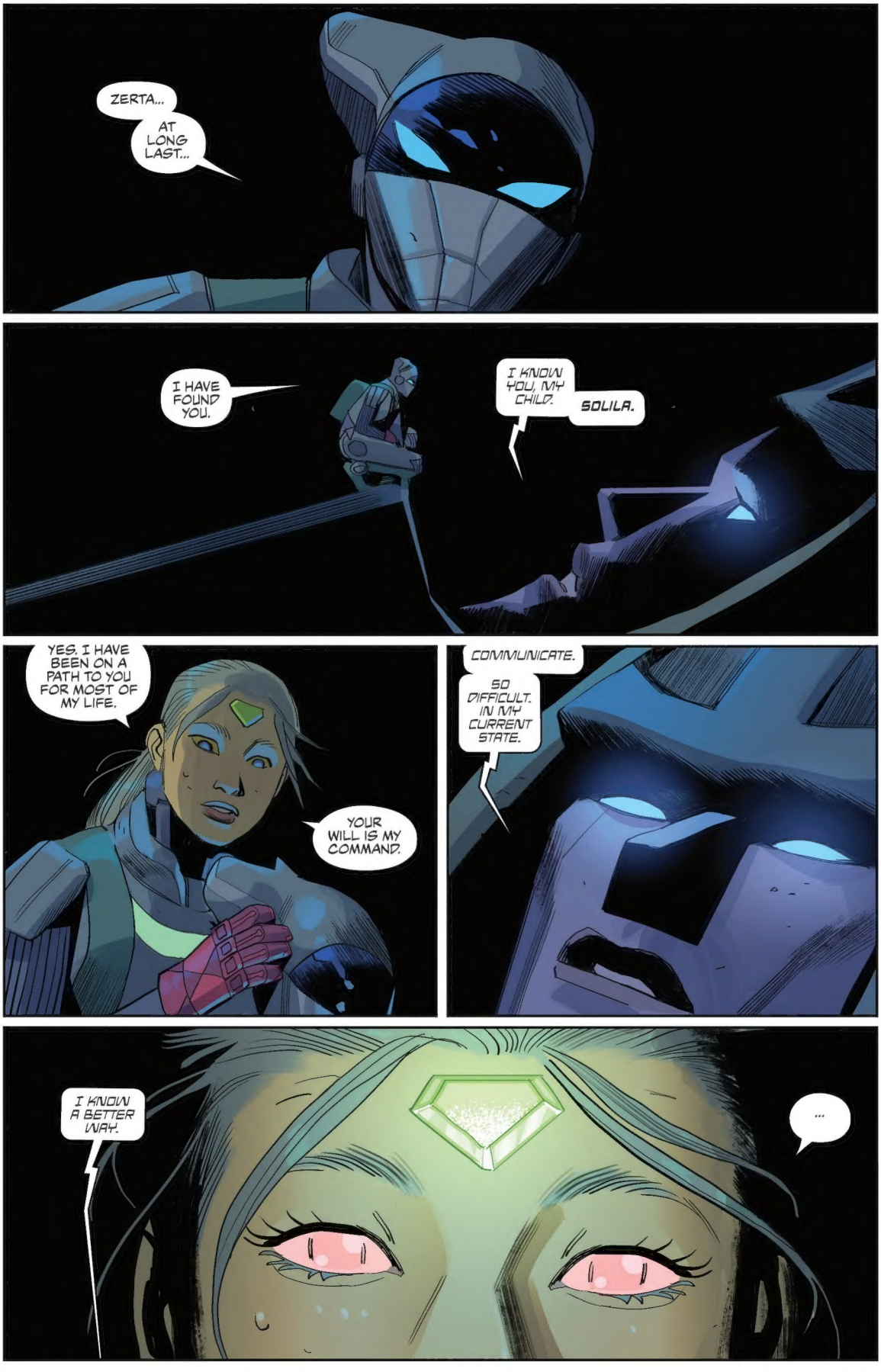
SPECIAL THANKS TO HASBRO'S ED LANE, MICHAEL COHN, LINDA LEE & TAYLA REO FOR THEIR INVALUABLE ASSISTANCE.

Licensed by:

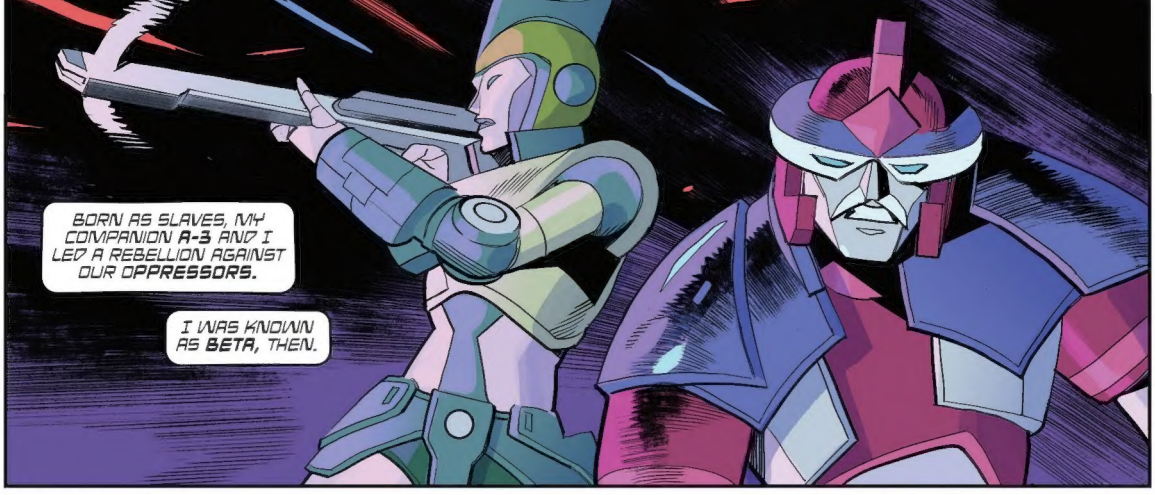
FOR SKYBOUND ENTERTAINMENT: ROBERT KIRKMAN *CHAIRMAN* | DAVID ALPERT *CEO* | SEAN MACKIEWICZ *SVP, PUBLISHER* | ANDRES JUAREZ *CREATIVE DIRECTOR, EDITORIAL* | ARUNE SINGH *VP, BRAND, EDITORIAL* | SHANNON MEEHAN *SENIOR PUBLIC RELATIONS MANAGER* | ALEX ANTONE *EDITORIAL DIRECTOR* | BEN ABERNATHY *EXECUTIVE EDITOR* | NACHIE MARSHAM *SENIOR EDITOR* | BLAKE KOBASHIGAWA *SR. DIRECTOR, BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT, EDITORIAL* | JILLIAN CRAB *ASSOCIATE ART DIRECTOR, EDITORIAL* | ASHBY FLORENCE *PRODUCTION ARTIST* | RICHARD MERCADO *PRODUCTION ARTIST* | ALEX HARGETT *DIRECTOR OF BRAND, EDITORIAL* | EV CLEMENTS *BRAND SPECIALIST, EDITORIAL* | ANNA GEORGE *BRAND COORDINATOR, EDITORIAL* | GREG FOREMAN *SENIOR CROWDFUNDING MANAGER* | DAN PETERSEN *SENIOR DIRECTOR, OPERATIONS & EVENTS* | FOREIGN RIGHTS & LICENSING INQUIRIES: FOREIGNLICENSING@SKYBOUND.COM | SKYBOUND.COM

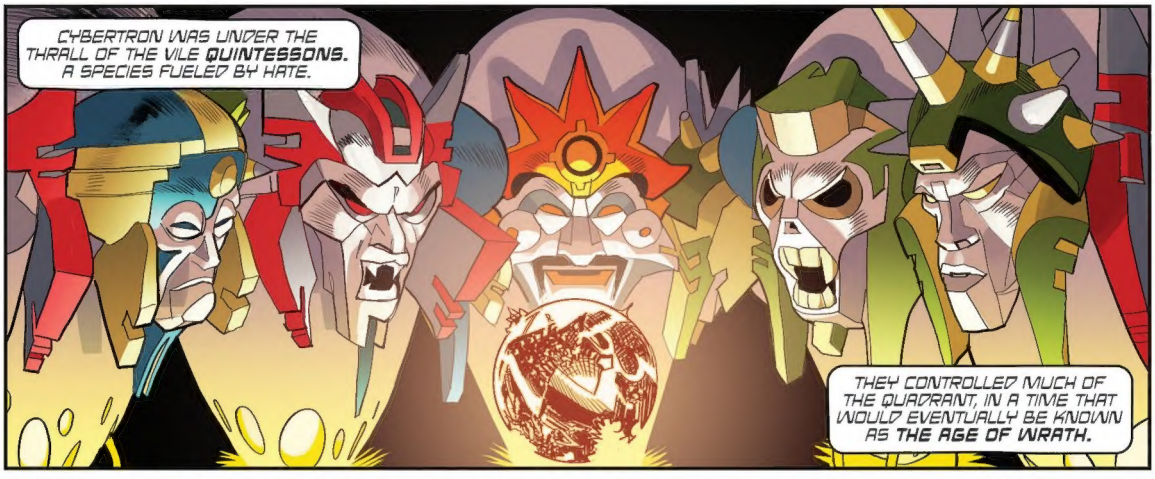
FOR IMAGE COMICS, INC: ROBERT KIRKMAN *CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER* | ERIK LARSEN *CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER* | TODD MCFARLANE *PRESIDENT* | MARC SILVESTRI *CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER* | JIM VALENTINO *EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT* | ERIC STEPHENSON *PUBLISHER / CHIEF CREATIVE OFFICER* | NICOLE LAPALME *VICE PRESIDENT OF FINANCE* | LEANNA CAUNTER *ACCOUNTING ANALYST* | SUE KORPELA *ACCOUNTING & HR MANAGER* | ALEX COX *DIRECTOR OF DIRECT MARKET SALES* | MARGOT WOOD *VICE PRESIDENT OF BOOK MARKET SALES* | CHLOE RAMOS *BOOK MARKET & LIBRARY SALES MANAGER* | KAT SALAZAR *VICE PRESIDENT OF PR & MARKETING* | DEANNA PHELPS *MARKETING DESIGN MANAGER* | JIM VISCARDI VICE *PRESIDENT OF BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT* | LORELEI BUNJES *VICE PRESIDENT OF DIGITAL STRATEGY* | EMILIO BAUTISTA *DIGITAL SALES COORDINATOR* | DIRK WOOD *VICE PRESIDENT OF INTERNATIONAL SALES & LICENSING* | RYAN BREWER *INTERNATIONAL SALES & LICENSING MANAGER* | DREW GILL *ART DIRECTOR* | HEATHER DOORNINK *VICE PRESIDENT OF PRODUCTION* | IAN BALDESSARI *PRINT MANAGER* | MELISSA GIFFORD *CONTENT MANAGER* | DREW FITZGERALD *CONTENT MANAGER* | ERIKA SCHNATZ *SENIOR PRODUCTION ARTIST* | WESLEY GRIFFITH *PRODUCTION ARTIST* | RICH FOWLKS *PRODUCTION ARTIST* | JON SCHLAFFMAN *PRODUCTION ARTIST* | IMAGECOMICS.COM

VOID RIVALS #17. MARCH 2025. PUBLISHED BY IMAGE COMICS, INC. OFFICE OF PUBLICATION: PO BOX 14457, PORTLAND, OR 97293. VOID RIVALS AND HASBRO AND ALL RELATED TRADEMARKS AND LOGOS ARE TRADEMARKS OF HASBRO, INC. ©2025 HASBRO. IMAGE COMICS® AND ITS LOGOS ARE REGISTERED TRADEMARKS AND COPYRIGHTS OF IMAGE COMICS, INC. NO PART OF THIS PUBLICATION MAY BE REPRODUCED OR TRANSMITTED IN ANY FORM OR BY ANY MEANS (EXCEPT FOR SHORT EXCERPTS FOR REVIEW PURPOSES) WITHOUT THE EXPRESS WRITTEN PERMISSION OF IMAGE COMICS, INC. ALL NAMES, CHARACTERS, EVENTS AND LOCALES IN THIS PUBLICATION ARE ENTIRELY FICTIONAL. ANY RESEMBLANCE TO ACTUAL PERSONS (LIVING OR DEAD), EVENTS OR PLACES, WITHOUT SATIRIC INTENT, IS COINCIDENTAL. DIGITAL EDITION.

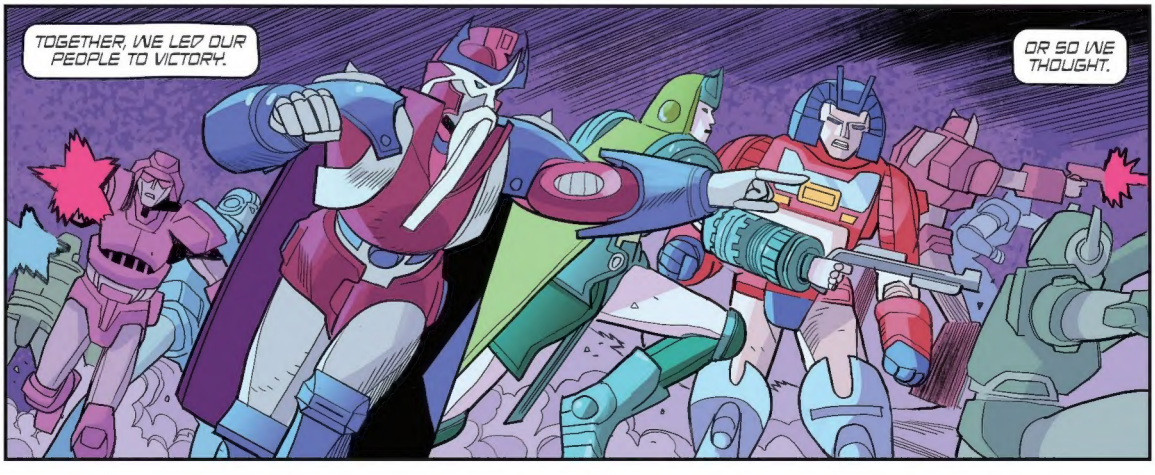

ZERTA...
AT LONG LAST...
I HAVE FOUND YOU.
I KNOW YOU, MY CHILD.
SOLILA.
YES. I HAVE BEEN ON A PATH TO YOU FOR MOST OF MY LIFE.
YOUR WILL IS MY COMMAND.
COMMUNICATE.
SO DIFFICULT. IN MY CURRENT STATE.
I KNOW A BETTER WAY.
...

YOU ARE ON A NEW PATH, ONE OF TREACHERY AND DANGER.
TO SURVIVE THIS PATH, YOU MUST KNOW WHAT LIES AHEAD AND WHAT CAME BEFORE.
MY STORY BEGAN SO LONG AGO.
ON CYBERTRON.

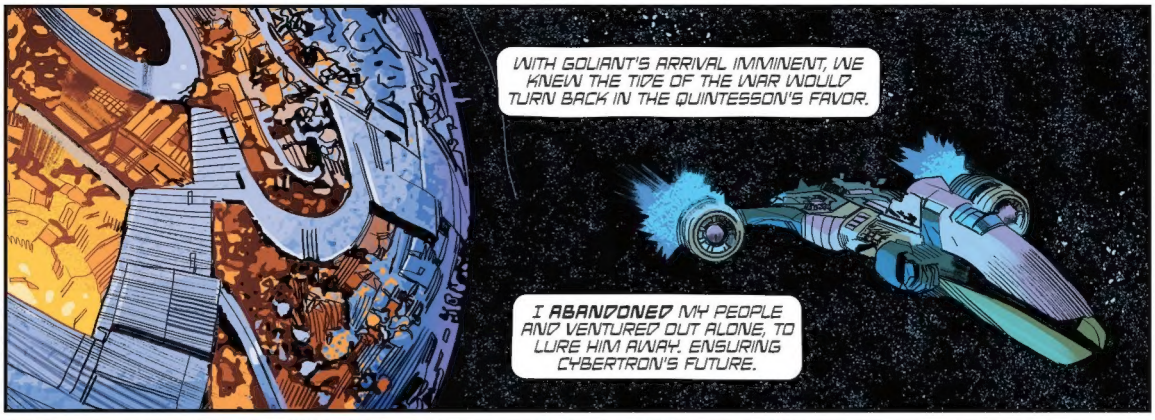

BORN AS SLAVES, MY COMPANION A-3 AND I LED A REBELLION AGAINST OUR OPPRESSORS.
I WAS KNOWN AS BETA, THEN.


CYBERTRON WAS UNDER THE THRALL OF THE VILE QUINTESSONS. A SPECIES FUELED BY HATE.
THEY CONTROLLED MUCH OF THE QUADRANT, IN A TIME THAT WOULD EVENTUALLY BE KNOWN AS THE AGE OF WRATH.

OVER TIME, OUR TRIALS CHANGED US.
WE BECAME ALPHA AND ZERTA, BOTH OF US TRIONS. A TITLE WORTHY OF OUR ACQUIRED WISDOM.


TOGETHER, WE LED OUR PEOPLE TO VICTORY.
OR SO WE THOUGHT.

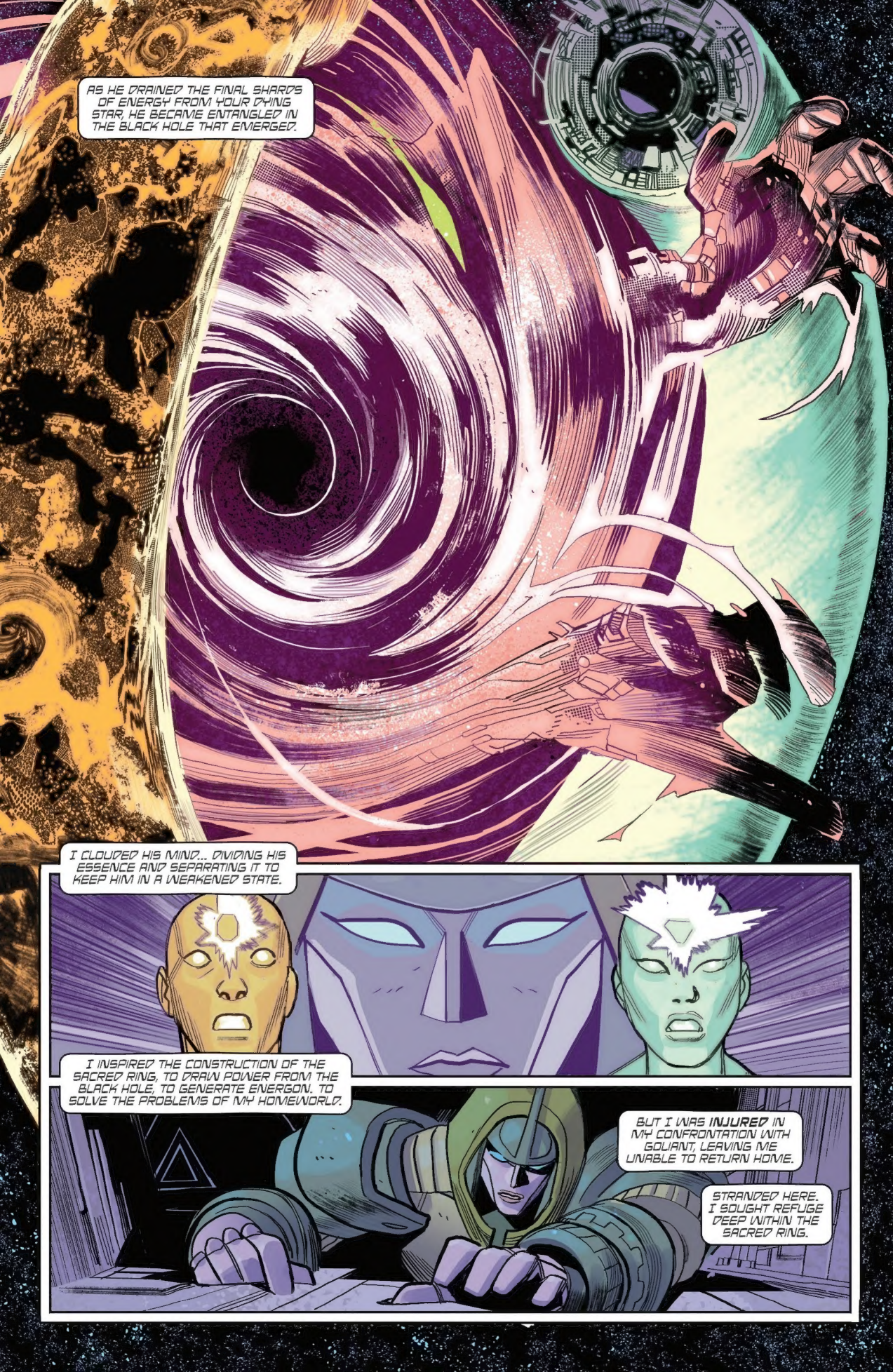
GOLIANT.
HE WAS THE QUINTESSON'S ULTIMATE WEAPON. THEIR FINAL RESORT... THEIR GREATEST CREATION...
AND OUR END.


WITH GOLIANT'S ARRIVAL IMMINENT, WE KNEW THE TIDE OF THE WAR WOULD TURN BACK IN THE QUINTESSON'S FAVOR.
I ABANDONED MY PEOPLE AND VENTURED OUT ALONE, TO LURE HIM AWAY. ENSURING CYBERTRON'S FUTURE.

I WAS ABLE TO LEAD HIM TO A DISTANT STAR, WHICH HE WOULD CONSUME, OVER A MILLENNIA.
AN ACTION THAT WOULD DOOM YOUR DISTANT ANCESTORS.

WHILE HE FEASTED, I PLOTTED.
I KNEW ONCE HE'D CONSUMED THE STAR, HE'D BE MORE POWERFUL THAN EVER.

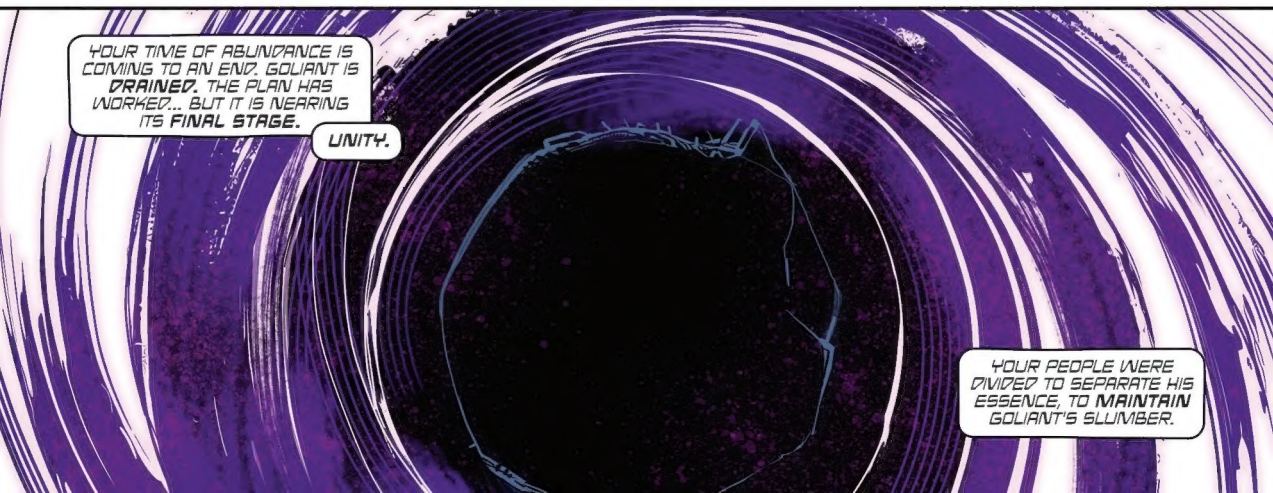
I INFLUENCED YOUR ANCESTORS. INSPIRING THEM TO BUILD A NEW MEANS OF SURVIVAL AS THE DYING STAR TOOK THEIR HOME PLANETS WITH IT.
THE SACRED RING
IT SERVED A DUAL PURPOSE AS GOLIANT'S PRISON.


AS HE DRAINED THE FINAL SHARDS OF ENERGY FROM YOUR DYING STAR, HE BECAME ENTANGLED IN THE BLACK HOLE THAT EMERGED.
I CLOUDED HIS MIND... DIVIDING HIS ESSENCE AND SEPARATING IT TO KEEP HIM IN A WEAKENED STATE.
I INSPIRED THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SACRED RING, TO DRAW POWER FROM THE BLACK HOLE, TO GENERATE ENERGON. TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS OF MY HOMEWORLD.
BUT I WAS **INJURED** IN MY CONFRONTATION WITH GOLIANT, LEAVING ME UNABLE TO RETURN HOME.
STRANDED HERE. I SOUGHT REFUGE DEEP WITHIN THE SACRED RING.

I WAS ABLE TO INFLUENCE YOUR ACTIONS FROM AFAR. SOME MORE THAN OTHERS. ZERTONIANS WERE MORE RECEPTIVE TO MY CALL.
TAKING MY NAME TO HONOR ME.

THE AGORRIANS WENT THEIR OWN WAY. STILL, HARBORING THEIR PORTION OF THE ESSENCE OF GOLIANT.

YOUR SACRED RING IS ESSENTIALLY A SISTER PLANET TO CYBERTRON, BUILT WITH MY INFLUENCE, WITH THE AID OF ITS OWN VECTOR INTELLIGENCE.
IT DRAWS **ABUNDANT** ENERGY FROM THE BLACK HOLE AND GOLIANT WITHIN. WHILE CYBERTRON IS A **HUSK** OF WHAT IT ONCE WAS IN ITS **GOLDEN AGE.**


YOUR TIME OF ABUNDANCE IS COMING TO AN END. GOLIANT IS **DRAINED.** THE PLAN HAS WORKED... BUT IT IS NEARING ITS **FINAL STAGE.**
UNITY.
YOUR PEOPLE WERE DIVIDED TO SEPARATE HIS ESSENCE, TO **MAINTAIN** GOLIANT'S SLUMBER.

HIS ESSENCE MUST NOW BE UNIFIED. ZERTONIANS AND AGORRIANS MUST UNITE TO BRING THIS ABOUT.
WE MUST RELEASE GOLIANT FROM HIS PRISON IN HIS MOST WEAKENED STATE. ONLY THEN CAN HE BE DESTROYED.
IF HE IS NOT DESTROYED, IT IS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME BEFORE HE BEGINS TO REGAIN HIS STRENGTH AND AWAKEN ON HIS OWN.
IT MUST BE NOW.
THIS IS THE SACRED CHARGE I NOW BESTOW ON YOU, SOLILA.

YOU HAVE BEEN GIVEN THE LIGHT OF MY WISDOM.
IT IS YOUR DUTY TO NOW SPREAD IT TO YOUR PEOPLE. ALL YOUR PEOPLE.
UNITE THEM.
I ACCEPT THIS MISSION, GLADLY.
ALTHOUGH, I FEAR, GREAT ZERTA... THAT I LACK THE POWER TO COMPLETE THIS TASK.
I WILL GIVE YOU THE POWER.

YOU DON'T KNOW THE FORCES WITH WHICH YOU MEDDLE, SON. YOU HAVE *SO MUCH* TO ANSWER FOR.

UNIFIERS!

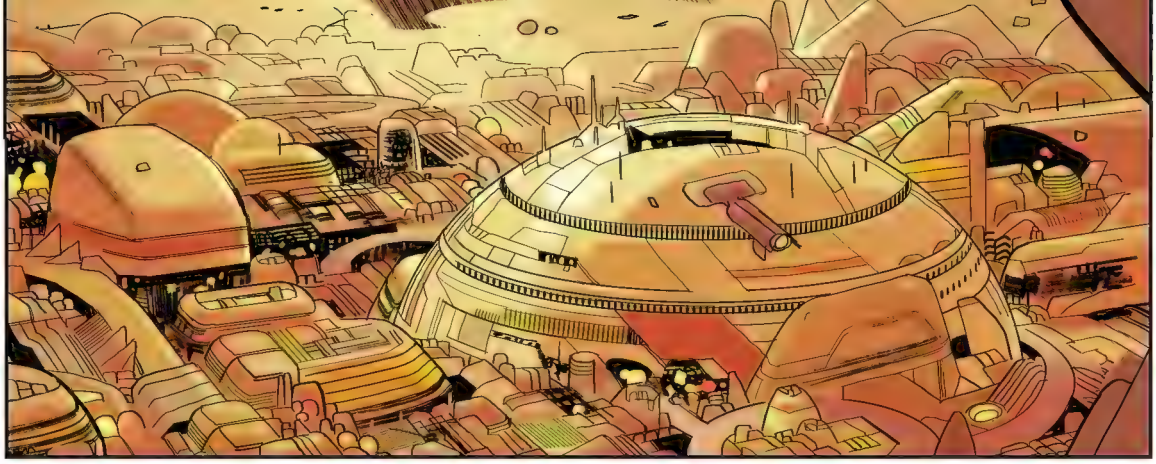
A NAIVE GROUP OF *TRAITORS* WITH NO KNOWLEDGE OF THE CATASTROPHE THEY RISK BRINGING ABOUT.

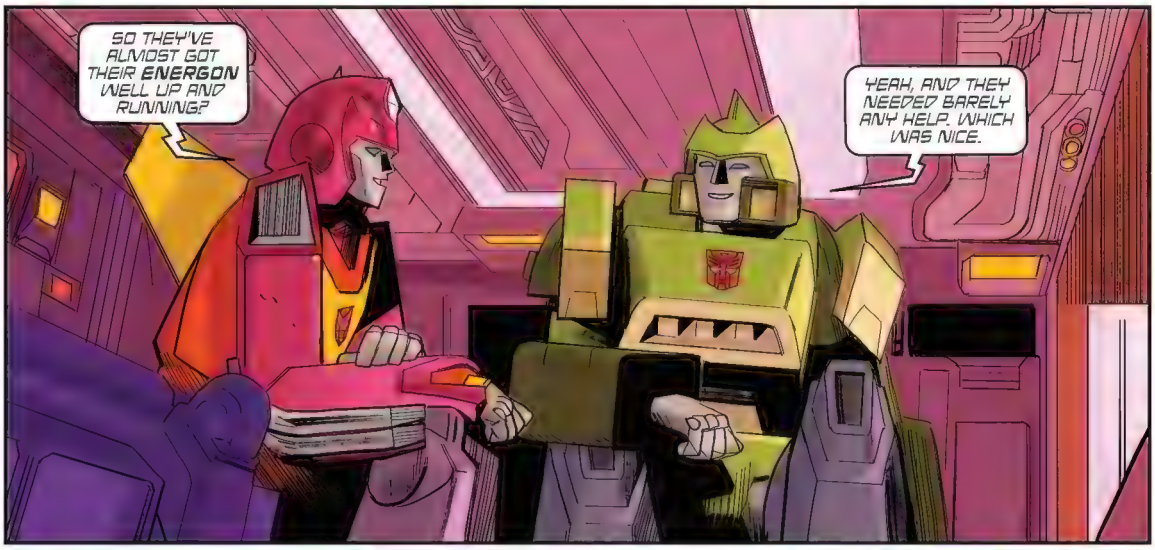
GOLIANT MUST BE CONTAINED.

UNITY MUST BE PREVENTED... *AT ALL COSTS...*

EVEN IF IT MEANS THE DEATH OF MY ONLY SON.
...
SO IT'S LIKE THAT THEN? WE'RE REALLY GOING THERE?
YOU'RE THREATENING TO KILL ME?
I HAVE DONE ALL I COULD TO STEER YOU AWAY FROM THIS PATH. STILL, YOU PERSIST. WHAT RECOURSE IS LEFT TO ME?
YOU RISK THE DEMISE OF ALL WHO LIVE AND ALL WHO WILL LIVE. WHAT WOULD YOU HAVE ME DO?
CLEARLY I DIDN'T... QUITE... RECOGNIZE THE GRAVITY OF THE SITUATION.
LET'S... UH... TALK THIS OVER SOME MORE.
PLEASE?

I'LL TAKE THAT AS A YES?
OKAY. YOU ADMITTED THIS IS A BURDEN YOU PROTECTED ME FROM. YOU GAVE ME SOME INFORMATION... BUT NOT ALL.
YOU WANT ME ON YOUR SIDE? LET ME KNOW WHAT YOU KNOW. SURELY THAT'S EASIER THAN KILLING ME.
GUARDS, LEAVE US.
LEAVE ME ALONE WITH MY SON.
OKAY... UNITY, GOLIANT... SO MUCH TO COVER.
LET'S GO.
BEFORE I BEGIN, YOU NEED TO UNDERSTAND, EVERY WORD I SPEAK IS THE TRUTH.
IT IS A TRUTH THAT BINDS US ALL.
IT IS NOT TO BE DOUBTED.
... EVER.




SO THEY'VE ALMOST GOT THEIR ENERGON WELL UP AND RUNNING?
YEAH, AND THEY NEEDED BARELY ANY HELP. WHICH WAS NICE.

SO... NOT THE MOST EXCITING PLACE I'VE BEEN.

HA! TRY SPENDING THOUSANDS OF YEARS IN THE WASTELAND.
THIS IS A PRYSMOSIAN WEDDING BY COMPARISON.

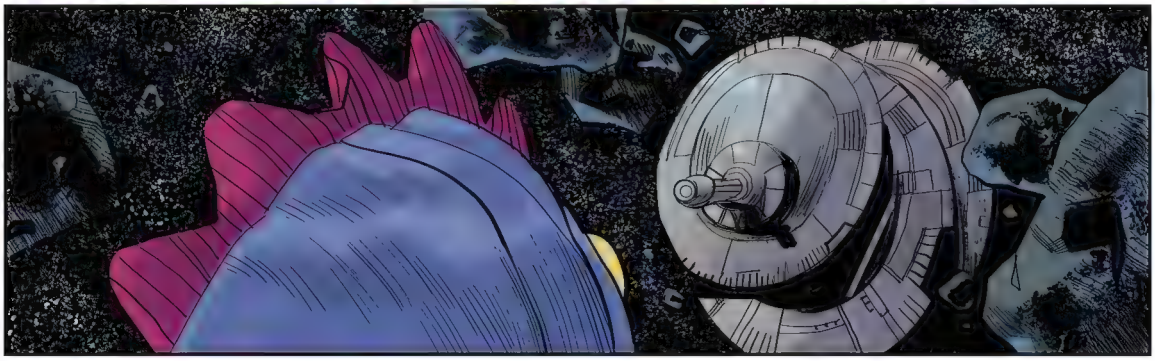
-HEH.-
I'LL TAKE YOUR WORD FOR IT.

IT DIDN'T SEEM TO DETECT US... OR CARE. I DON'T KNOW WHICH.
I GROW WEARY OF THESE DISTRACTIONS. OUR MISSION IS TO FIND THIS CYBERTRON AND DISCOVER MORE OF ITS INHABITANTS.

STILL. NOTHING MOVES THAT FAST WITHOUT PURPOSE. THAT PURPOSE COULD INTEREST US.
CAN YOU TRACK IT BACK TO ITS DESTINATION?

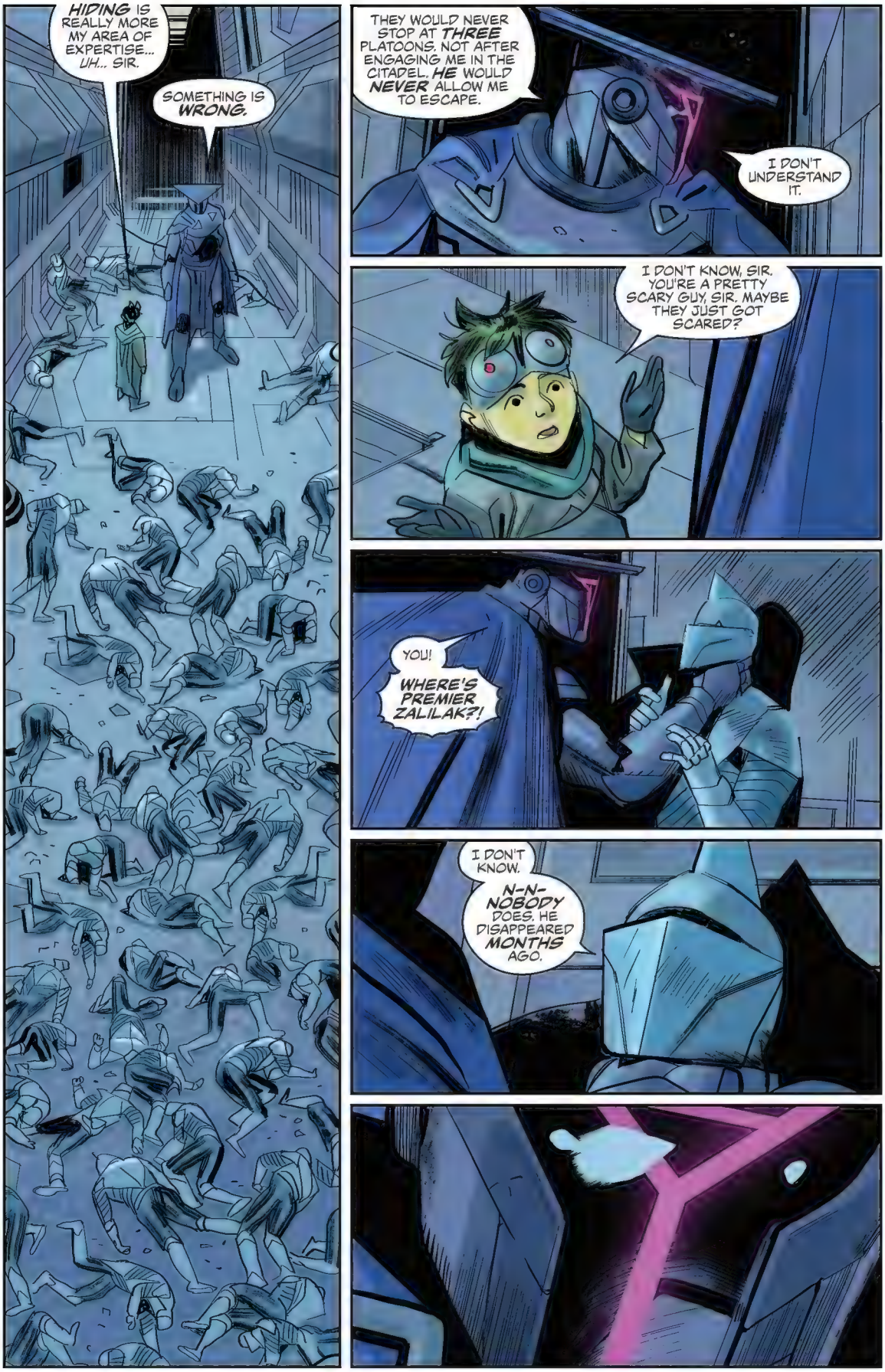
IF WE BEGIN PURSUIT IMMEDIATELY, WE MAY BE ABLE TO FOLLOW ITS ENERGY SIGNAL BEFORE IT DECAYS COMPLETELY. AS LONG AS ITS JOURNEY ISN'T TOO LONG.
IT IS A RISK. WE COULD LOSE THE SIGNAL AND FIND OURSELVES IN A REMOTE SECTION OF SPACE.

I WILL NOT ACT BASED ON FEAR.
FOR GOLOBULUS'S GLORY. FOR COBRA-LA. FOLLOW IT.



I TOLD YOU WE TOOK TOO LONG.
I SHOULD HAVE NEVER AGREED TO SEARCH THE DATABASE FOR YOUR MOTHER.
VA-HP
WRAM
WROKK
KRE-OM
SORRY, SIR.
DRAMM
THOOM

I WOULD SAY YOU ARE BRAVE TO FACE ME, BUT I AM CERTAIN YOU KNEW NOT WHO YOU FACED WHEN YOU RECEIVED YOUR ORDERS.
STILL, I HAVE NOTICED VERY FEW OF YOU FLEEING DURING THIS MELEE. IMPRESSIVE.
I WILL ENDEAVOR TO LEAVE YOU ALL LIVING, IF I CAN. YOU ARE ONLY DOING YOUR DUTY.
NEAT.
ULTUM?
JUST-- GOING TO-- WATCH?
SORRY, SIR. I'M NOT A VERY GOOD FIGHTER, SIR.


HIDING IS REALLY MORE MY AREA OF EXPERTISE... UH... SIR.
SOMETHING IS WRONG.
THEY WOULD NEVER STOP AT THREE PLATOONS. NOT AFTER ENGAGING ME IN THE CITADEL. HE WOULD NEVER ALLOW ME TO ESCAPE.
I DON'T UNDERSTAND IT.
I DON'T KNOW, SIR. YOU'RE A PRETTY SCARY GUY, SIR. MAYBE THEY JUST GOT SCARED?
YOU!
WHERE'S PREMIER ZALILAK?!
I DON'T KNOW.
N-N-NOBODY DOES. HE DISAPPEARED MONTHS AGO.

IF HE SURVIVES THE CAVERNS OF RALL, HE WILL EMERGE, FOREVER CHANGED...
A LORD OF ZERTA'S LIGHT. POSSIBLY EVEN... THE TRUE FIRST CHOSEN.

TALK TO THE HANDROID

SEND YOUR QUESTIONS TO VOIDRIVALS@SKYBOUND.COM

Welcome back to another thrilling chapter of VOID RIVALS and I hope you're as excited as I am that Zalilak the Barbarian has arrived! I'm your co-host, Ben Abernathy, and joining me once again is *New York Times* best-selling author, Robert Kirkman!

You make that list once and it counts! It counts forever! Hey, who else is excited as me to be at issue 17?! How cool is that? Pretty soon we'll be in the 20s, can you believe it? So many cool things ahead for the Energon Universe. I gotta say, there's SO MUCH amazing stuff coming up in all these books...man oh man...just wait, guys... it's going to be nuts.

You know what else cool is coming up? Responses to mail!

. . . . . .

Dear Handroid,

Please extend my warmest thanks to Sir Lorenzo De Felici for an incredible cover to issue 14. Handroid, is it even possible to create a more beautiful cover that says so much without a word at all?

The choices for the sources of light in deep space in the wake of the ring clad void, are brilliant! And, the perspective almost literally invites the reader to take their hand and turn the page to see what may be happening inside!

So, I humbly ask, can we have more action on the first page, or pages, to complement such incredible covers?

Well, let's not get carried away! Although, I will admit...this arc is a little light on action. Sorry about that. There was just so much ground to cover! But wait...issue 16! Maybe there was enough action. Leave me alone!

Handroid, I really want little Handroids to get into this series yet there seems to be many subplots happening, and fighting for each page. It feels like we have enough subplots for another series. Is another series planned?

Heh.

Handroid, is Sir Abernathy responsible for getting a new Energon series off the ground? If so,let's call it Event Horizon! Or, More Work for Ben!

Transversing the Void

One step at a time,

Aaron
Earth

More work for me?! Dang...but little Handroids would be pretty cute!

All joking aside, no new Energon Universe titles for the foreseeable future. We're going to keep this line LEAN until it's packed so much it has to explode into a fourth title.

. . . . . .

Dear HANDROID

Well, I just read issues 13 and 14 of VOID RIVALS. To me, the best thing about the issue(s) was that we get to meet ANOTHER Handroid! That was awesome! My Question: Do you think you two will ever get a chance to meet each other and converse? I think that would be NEXT LEVEL awesome! Anyway, at the author/editor's suggestion, I also bought and read the new G.I. JOE #1. Let's just say that it's probably not my cup of tea, but I'll write them a letter about it. 'Til Handroid meets the other Handroid and further on, make mine Void Rivals!

Alan Bowman
Sagamihara City, Japan

MORE ABOUT HANDROID?! And will the Handroids ever meet? That's an excellent question and I think we'll have to wait and see...also, it's nice to have you back, Alan, sorry G.I. JOE wasn't your jam but we appreciate you giving it a try.

I also appreciate you giving G.I. JOE a try, it might not be your cup of tea, but man, at least skim issue 2 in the shop before you buy it. It's probably my favorite book going right now and that's saying so much while DWJ and Jorge Corona are firing on all cylinders on TRANSFORMERS.

. . . . . .

Looks like that's it for mail! Ben Abernathy usually writes a sign off first, but it seems like he forgot so I'll type one for him:

YO JOE dawgs and dawgettes! That's it for this letters column! Be here next month for the epic conclusion of this arc of VOID RIVALS. Rock over London, Rock on Chicago! Burger King, you Rule!

-Benmoney Blabbernathy

Okay, Ben...that was a bit of an odd sign off, but yes, issue 18, next month, big deal. Cool stuff. People aren't ready, that's for sure! And then...oh, man...issue 19?! So great!!! How do we top all this Goliant business?!!

-Robert Kirkman

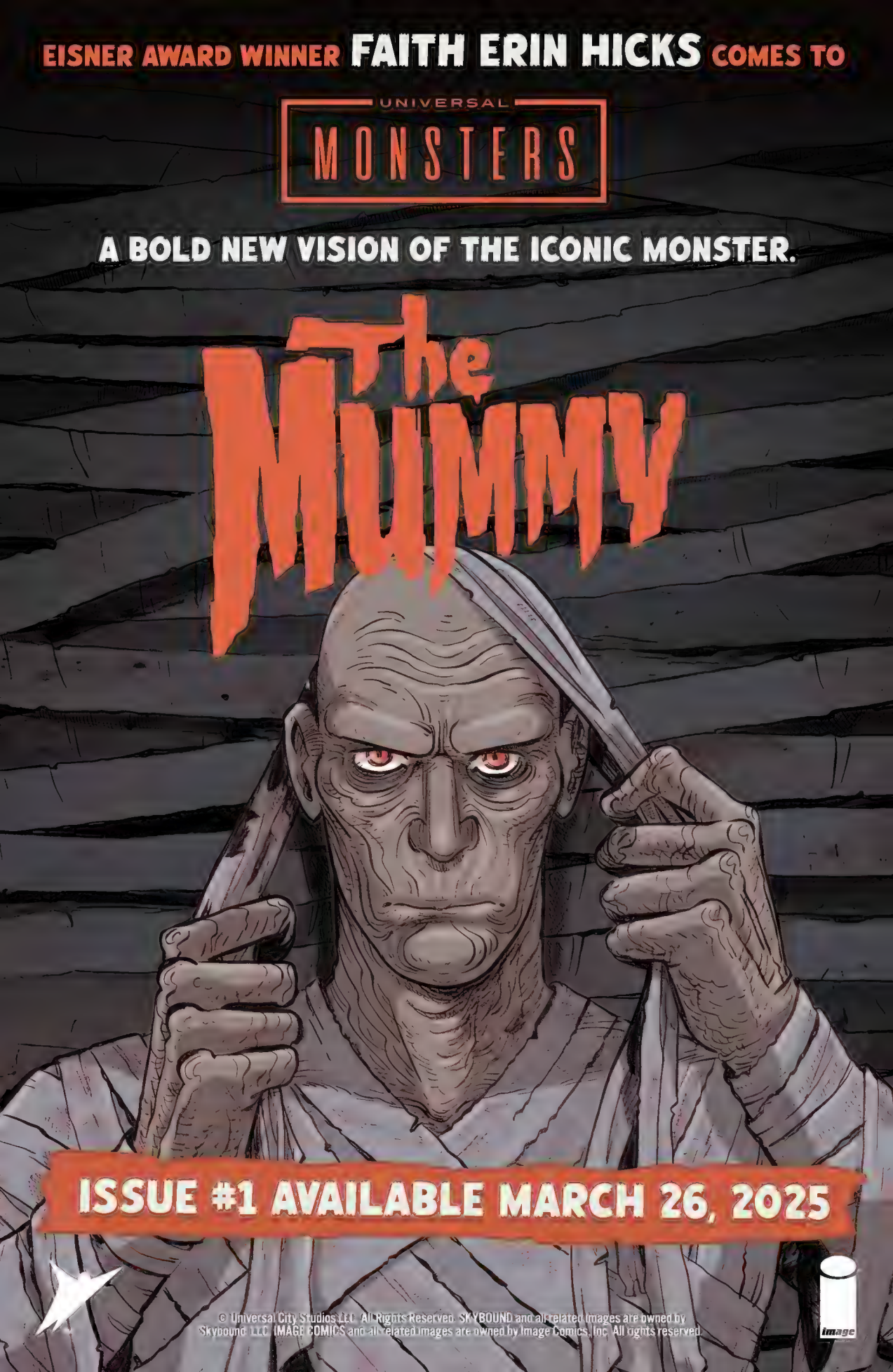
EXPLORE THE ENERGON UNIVERSE

ROBERT KIRKMAN'S ALL-NEW **TRANSFORMERS** AND **G.I. JOE** SHARED UNIVERSE CONTINUES EVERY MONTH IN THESE TITLES!

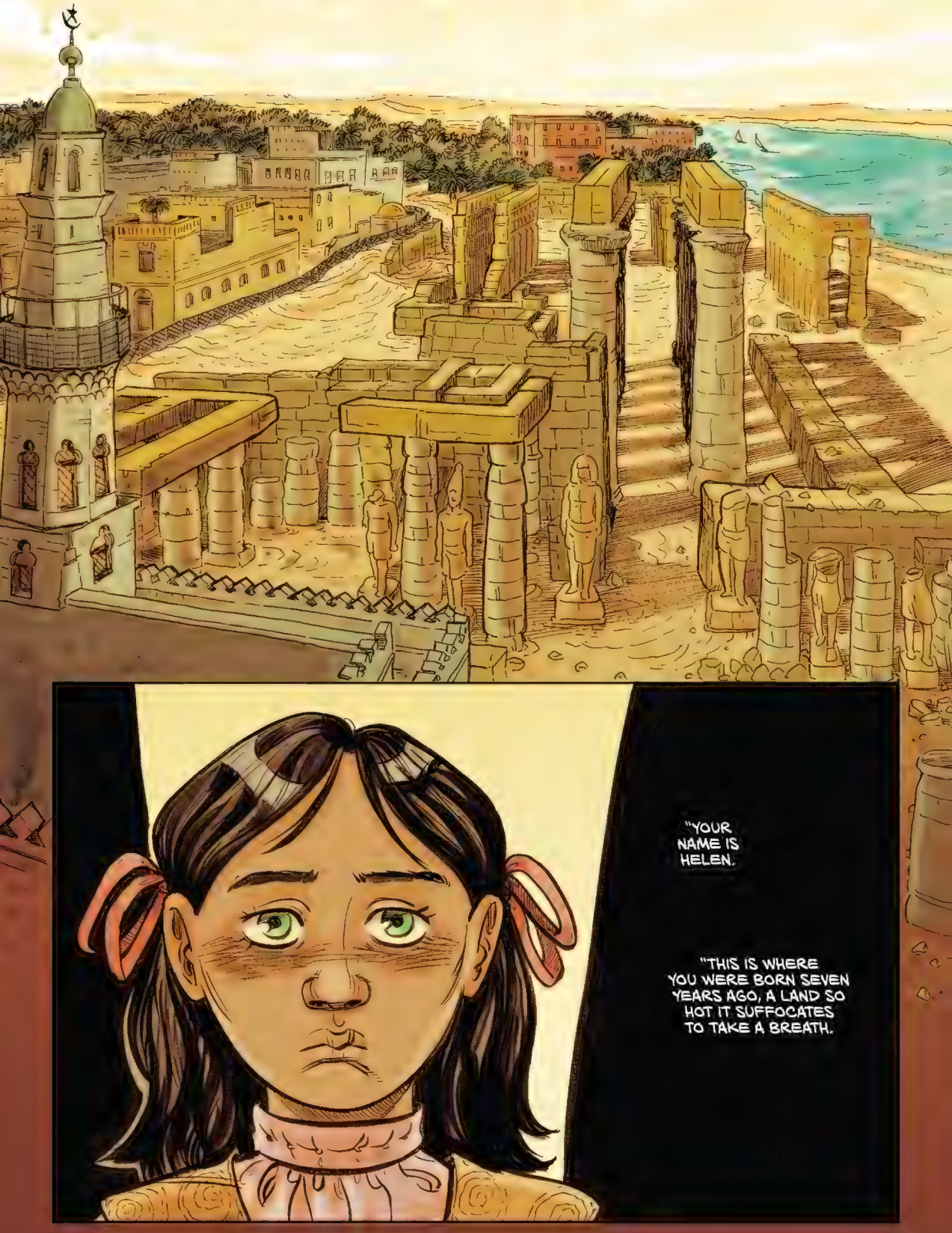
PRE-ORDER UPCOMING RELEASES WITH YOUR LOCAL COMIC SHOP NOW!

skybound.com | @skyboundent | @skyboundent

VOID RIVALS, TRANSFORMERS, G.I. JOE and all related characters are trademarks of Hasbro and are used with permission. © 2025 Hasbro. All rights reserved. SKYBOUND and all related images are owned by Skybound, LLC. IMAGE COMICS and all related images are owned by Image Comics, Inc. All rights reserved.


EISNER AWARD WINNER FAITH ERIN HICKS COMES TO
UNIVERSAL
MONSTERS
A BOLD NEW VISION OF THE ICONIC MONSTER.
The Mummy
ISSUE #1 AVAILABLE MARCH 26, 2025
© Universal City Studios LLC. All Rights Reserved. SKYBOUND and all related images are owned by Skybound LLC. IMAGE COMICS and all related images are owned by Image Comics, Inc. All rights reserved.
image

THEBES, 1912


"YOUR NAME IS HELEN.
"THIS IS WHERE YOU WERE BORN SEVEN YEARS AGO, A LAND SO HOT IT SUFFOCATES TO TAKE A BREATH.

EGYPT. ONCE RULED BY GOD-TOUCHED KINGS, NOW SUFFERING BENEATH THE BOOT OF FOREIGNERS.

THIS IS YOUR MOTHER.

AND THAT IS YOUR FATHER.
YOU ARE TOO YOUNG TO YET KNOW HOW COMPLICATED YOUR LIFE WILL BE AS THE DAUGHTER OF A BRITISH MAN AND AN EGYPTIAN WOMAN.

SEE? THEY'RE DIGGING FOR TREASURE.
WHY?
IT'S WHAT THE BRITISH HAVE HIRED THEM TO DO.
THE BRITISH WANT TO TAKE THE PAST OUT OF THE GROUND, SO PEOPLE WHO LIVE NOW CAN SEE HOW THEIR ANCESTORS LIVED.

CREEEAKK

CRAAKK
AAAHHH!
COMPENSATE THAT WORKER AND CONTINUE EXCAVATING. WE MUSTN'T LOSE THE DAY.
TOO MANY ACCIDENTS, THE WORKERS ARE SAYING THE SITE IS CURSED--
NONSENSE. FIRE ANYONE WHO SPREADS THAT FILTH.
؟

UNIVERSAL PICTURES AND SKYBOUND PRESENT

The Mummy

COLLECT ALL THESE EXCITING ENERGON UNIVERSE COVERS

COVER A

LORENZO DE FELICI

COVER B

NIKOLA ČIŽMEŠIJA

COVER C

CONOR HUGHES

COVER D

JOEY VAZQUEZ

COVER E

FRÉDÉRIC PHAM CHUONG

AVAILABLE NOW WHEREVER COMICS ARE SOLD

Licensed by: Hasbro

VOID RIVALS and all related characters are trademarks of Hasbro and are used with permission. © 2025 Hasbro. All rights reserved. SKYBOUND and all related images are owned by Skybound, LLC. IMAGE COMICS and all related images are owned by Image Comics, Inc. All rights reserved.